

FORM B – BUILDING

Assessor's Number USGS Quad Area(s) Form Number

15-114

Orleans

EAS.1282

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Town/City: EASTHAM

Place: (*neighborhood or village*):

Photograph



Address: 20 Hemenway Court

Historic Name: John Fulcher – Mary Baker House

Uses: Present: Single Family Dwelling House

Original: Single Family Dwelling House

Date of Construction: [1929-1932]

Source: Deed research, 1929 *Barnstable Directory*, vital records

Style/Form: Craftsman/ Bungalow

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: Unknown

Wall/Trim: Wood shingles/ Wood

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:

Gable-front garage (1970s)

Major Alterations (*with dates*):

None on record

Condition: Good

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

Acreage: 0.55 acres

Setting: This small road is located just north of Fort Hill Rural Historic District. This house is located at the end of a long, shared driveway. The surrounding area is sparsely settled with mid-20th through early-21st century houses. This parcel is open around the house with lawn and foundation plantings, and the perimeter of the property has mature trees and shrubbery.

Locus Map



Recorded by: Eric Dray, Preservation Consultant, for

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date (*month / year*): April 2025

INVENTORY FORM B CONTINUATION SHEET

EASTHAM

20 HEMENWAY COURT

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

Use as much space as necessary to complete the following entries, allowing text to flow onto additional continuation sheets.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Describe architectural features. Evaluate the characteristics of this building in terms of other buildings within the community.

The Fulcher-Baker House, built in ca. 1929-1932, has characteristics typical of a Craftsman-style bungalow; most notably, the side-gable form of the main block with projecting eaves, and low-pitched shed dormers on both sides. On the front elevation, the roof projects forward at a lower pitch, part of which is an open porch. The rear elevation has a similar one-story component. The elevations are clad in weathered wood shingles with plain cornerboards. The roof is clad in asphalt shingles, and a brick chimney rises from the roof ridge. Windows have all been replaced and now consist primarily of casement windows.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

Discuss the history of the building. Explain its associations with local (or state) history. Include uses of the building, and the role(s) the owners/occupants played within the community.

Incorporated as Nauset Plantation in 1646, and changed to Eastham in 1651, Eastham territory originally extended south to Pleasant Bay and north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. The early development pattern for what we now know as Eastham was impacted by its absence of deep-water harbor facilities. Relatively fertile soil led to dispersed agricultural settlement, but residential and commercial development was concentrated to the north at Wellfleet Harbor and to the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay. When the separate towns of Wellfleet and Orleans were created in the late-18th century, Eastham became and remained one of the least populated towns on the Cape throughout the 19th century.

In the 19th century, Eastham was the agricultural center of the Outer Cape. Crops evolved over time; corn and dairy were surpassed in the early-20th century by asparagus and turnips - two crops well suited for the sandy soil. In 1900, 58% of Eastham's workers were employed as farmers, but by 1930 that number had dwindled to 21%. Summer resort development, including cottage colonies and subdivisions of former farmland that would transform Eastham, had begun in earnest in the 1920s as middle-class access to car ownership increased and Cape roads were improved.

This house was built on land that Charles D. Sisson of Eastham sold in 1927 to John G. Fulcher, also of Eastham.¹ The parcel was then four acres in size and was bordered on the south by Hemenway land. In two deeds dated 1928 and 1931, Fulcher sold a portion of this land totaling one acre to Mary. J. S. Baker of Needham.² The Eastham real estate tax records for 1927-1929 are not available. The 1930 tax records show Mary Baker as being taxed for a cottage. It is unknown if Fulcher had built the cottage before the Bakers bought the land.

John G. Fulcher (1866-1938) married Clara Paine Higgins (1859-1950) in Eastham in 1916. Around that time, he appears to have built the small house at 1685 State Highway (EAS.20). However, John G. Fulcher is never shown in tax records as the owner of any Eastham real estate. The 1685 State Highway property, for example, was rented from his younger brother, Obed Abelino Fulcher, who also owned the family farm at 155 Governor Prence Road (EAS.770) built by their father, John Fulcher (1838-99). The 1930 census continues to show John as a renter; and by then he was working as a cemetery caretaker. Tax records for 1931 show him as owner of three acres but still no buildings, which would make sense since he had sold by then one acre of the four acres he purchased in 1927.

Like his father before him, John G. Fulcher was a farmer, including asparagus fields. In the 1931 deed mentioned above, he reserved the right to continue farming a portion of the parcel under cultivation for asparagus until the bed "runs out or becomes unprofitable to cultivate."

¹ Barnstable County Registry of Deeds, Book 450/ Page 132.

² Book 458/ Page 383, Book 484/ Page 24.

Mary J. S. Baker (1864-1944) was born in Maine to James and Ellen Love. She married Abijah Baker (d. 1932) in Cambridge in 1886. He worked as a tailor or clothing cutter all his life. They first lived in Somerville and then Needham. They were not listed in the 1929 *Barnstable City Directory* with a house in Eastham, so this cottage was likely built sometime between 1929 and Abijah Baker's death in 1932. The house is shown in this location on a 1938 United States Geological Survey (USGS) aerial photo (Photo 3). This image shows how this house was then accessed from a driveway directly off the State Highway.

In 1943, a conservator for Mary Baker sold this property, still then described as two parcels, to Charles H. and Marion H. Watson of Boston.³ Born in South Boston, Charles Hazen Watson (1899-1982) married Marion Holden Glover (1899-1982) of Jamaica Plain in 1930. According to their wedding announcement, he worked as a representative and distributor for a New York silk concern. In 1960, this property was deeded just to Marion Watson. They appear to have divorced; when she sold this property in 1970, she was unmarried and living in Jamaica Plain. She sold it to Dana W. Eldridge in 1970, who quickly recorded a two-lot subdivision and sold this cottage in 1971, now on Lot 2, to Dorothy and Edward W. Millette, Jr. of Feeding Hills (Agawam), MA.⁴ The property remains in the Millette family.

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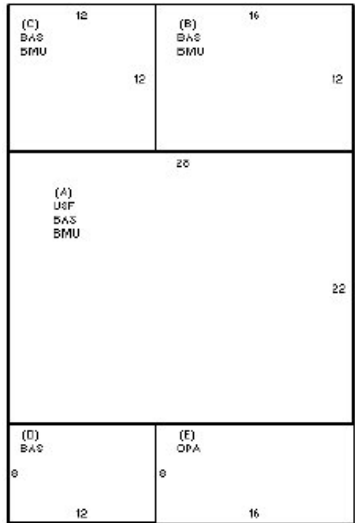


Figure 1. Assessor Sketch Map.



Photo 2. View looking east (2006 Assessor photo).

³ Book 606/ Page 290.
⁴ Book 1487/ Page 251, Book 1497/ Page 222.

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Photo 3. Detail of 1938 USGS aerial photo (arrow to 20 Hemenway Court added).